



DISTRICT OF MACKENZIE COUNCIL MEMBER'S HANDBOOK 2022



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CONGRATULATIONS!

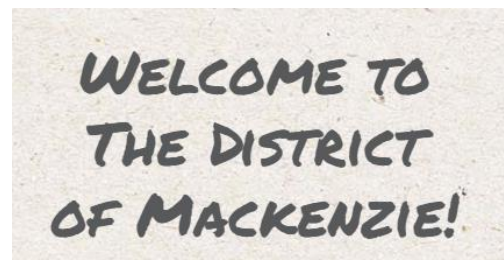
Welcome and congratulations on your election to the District Of Mackenzie Council.

The voters have spoken, and you are the candidate they have elected to meet the challenges and make decisions that are in the best interest of the District and its citizens. You have the opportunity to influence the quality of life in your community. Being an effective leader is not something that miraculously happens when you are elected to office. Leadership skills must be learned. You need to listen to the residents of the District and the Council, develop goals, and then work effectively with the Council to achieve your objectives.

Your voters have put their trust in you to manage and make decisions that are in their best interests. You are now part of a team expected to make decisions that will objectively and fairly affect all ratepayers. Voters in your municipality very quickly recognize when there is dissension among members of Council. When voters recognize Council dissension, they lose confidence in Council's ability to manage the municipality.

Entering the role of Elected Official and performing this role in public is daunting at the best of times. An essential factor in the success of a Council is the governance skills and knowledge they gain early in their terms. Council must understand and act according to the legislated authorities given to municipalities. Choosing to act outside of jurisdiction is contrary to law and places the municipality at risk. This handbook has been created as a resource for Council to refer to during the length of the electoral term. It contains information and guidance to assist elected officials in performing competently in their roles and is intended to help you understand the powers and duties of a municipal Council as a whole and you as an individual Councillor.

Good Luck!



MUNICIPAL HALL

Office Hours - 8:30 am – 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday excluding holidays.

After Hours Access - Key – alarms need to be disarmed – only keyed entry to building. You will be provided with a key and an alarm code to enter.



Mailing Address – 1 Mackenzie Boulevard, Bag 340, Mackenzie, BC, V0J 2C0

Email Address

The domain name for email is @districtofmackenzie.ca. Councillor emails consists of first name and domain address.

Telephone Numbers

Switch Board 250-997-3221

Fax Machine 250-997-5186

Meetings Rooms

The Committee Room and the Council Chambers can be booked through the Executive Assistant or Corporate Officer for municipal purposes. The Executive Assistant will also work with members of Council to provide some clerical services.

Administration & Departments – See Appendix A

Chief Administrative Officer

Director of Operations

Director of Corporate Services/Corporate Officer

Human Resources

Executive Assistant/Legislative Clerk

Director of Recreation Services

Chief Financial Officer Financial Services Supervisor

Finance Clerks

Fire Chief

ADMINISTRATION AND DEPARTMENT CONTRACTS



Chief Administrative Officer	Diane Smith	diane@districtofmackenzie.ca
Director of Corporate Services/Corporate Officer	Emily Kaehn	ekaehn@districtofmackenzie.ca
Executive Assistant/Legislative Clerk	Chelsea Smirle	chelsea@districtofmackenzie.ca
Chief Financial Officer	Kerri Borne	kerri@districtofmackenzie.ca
Financial Services Supervisor	Wendy Peterson	wendy@districtofmackenzie.ca
Finance Clerks	Rose Pearce (payroll)	rose@districtofmackenzie.ca
	Michaela Dagneau	michaela@districtofmackenzie.ca
Director of Recreation Services	Terry Gilmer	terry@districtofmackenzie.ca
Director of Operations/Project Manager	Ken Gawryluk	ken@districtofmackenzie.ca
Human Resources	Kaleena Wilson	kaleena@districtofmackenzie.ca
Fire Chief	Jamie Guise	jguise@districtofmackenzie.ca

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Powers and responsibilities are divided between the federal and provincial governments under the Canadian Constitution. Provinces are responsible for "municipal institutions" or local governments. The Province, in turn, assigns its powers in this sphere to local governments through provincial legislation.

The [purpose](#) of a local government is to provide services and regulations for community benefit, provide stewardship of the public assets, and foster its communities' economic, social, and environmental well-being. The provincial government must expressly grant powers to local governments to carry out their duties. Decision-making at the local level includes more interaction with citizens than the provincial or federal government, and the decisions made impact the communities more directly.

MUNICIPALITIES

Municipalities include cities, towns, districts, villages, townships, and resort municipalities. A municipality has the capacity, rights, powers, and privileges of a natural person of full capacity. A municipality may provide any service that the Council considers necessary or desirable and may do this directly or through another public authority or another person or organization. Municipalities may choose to provide their residents with a wide range of services and regulate activity within their boundaries.

"Municipal Government is based on the principle of ensuring that residents have a voice in the affairs of their community that impact their well-being. This requires the election of people who are prepared to serve in leadership positions and who are willing to exercise their best judgments on issues impacting the lives of others."

George Cuff "Cuff's Guide for Municipal Leaders- A Survival Guide for Elected Officials"

REGIONAL DISTRICTS

The local government system in British Columbia is unique in Canada because, in addition to the 162 municipal governments, it is comprised of 27 regional districts. Each regional district is divided into smaller areas called electoral areas.

Regional districts were incorporated in 1965 by the province to:

- provide a general-purpose local government for unincorporated areas;
- provide a political and administrative framework for providing region-wide services, inter-municipal or sub-regional services through the creation of benefiting areas; and
- to undertake activities mandated by the provincial government.

Regional district mandated functions include:

- general government for unincorporated areas;
- long-term capital financing for municipal members;
- hospital capital financing;
- land use planning in rural areas,
- solid waste management, and
- emergency planning.

Regional districts are federations of municipalities and electoral areas. Municipalities are part of the regional district structure while also maintaining their municipal structure and authority. This distinction gives regional districts the ability to customize joint services through partnerships that fit a variety of different needs and geographic scales across the province. The individual jurisdictions that comprise a Regional District work together to enable the organization to fulfill its purposes as service providers, administrative agencies, and federations.

Regional districts all have the same basic governing structure. A governing Board is composed of elected municipal directors appointed to the Board by their municipal Councils, and electoral

area directors elected from electoral areas. All regional district members are classified as directors.



COUNCIL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE OF COUNCIL

Council is the [governing body](#) of the municipal corporation. All decisions for the municipality are made by the elected Council, which consists of the Mayor and Councillors. The most important roles that Council plays are the consideration and passage of municipal bylaws, financial planning, budget approval, the appointment of official officers, and determination of the basic organization of the community by representing all residents

A single member of Council does not have the power to bind the municipality in any way or direct either its employees or its affairs. Council as a whole – as opposed to individual Council members – has the full authority to commit the municipality to action, give direction to staff and expend civic funds. [Councils may only exercise their authority by resolution or bylaw.](#)

Council:

- makes decisions for the municipality regarding services by resolution or by bylaw;
- develops and evaluates policies and programs;
- it is accountable to the public for the decisions it makes; and
- ensures that the municipality acts within the law.

ROLE OF COUNCILLORS

Council members are elected to govern. Your job as a Councillor is to work with other Council members to set the overall direction of the municipality in your role as a policymaker. The policies that Council sets are the guidelines for the administration to follow as it handles the municipality's operations. Much of your time on Council will be spent considering new policies and programs and reviewing the current ones to make sure they are working as they should.

Councillors have the following [responsibilities](#):

- consider the well-being and interests of the municipality;
- contribute to the development and evaluation of the policies and programs of the municipality respecting its services and other activities;
- participate in Council meetings, committee meetings, and meetings of other bodies to which the member is appointed;
- carry out other duties assigned by the Council; and
- carry out other duties assigned under the *Community Charter* this or any other Act.

ROLE OF THE MAYOR

The Mayor is the head and Chief Executive Officer of the municipality. The Mayor has no more legal authority than any other member of Council. They have no authority to make decisions that bind the municipality, nor can they direct the work of staff.

In addition to the Mayor's responsibilities as a member of Council, the Mayor also has the following legislative responsibilities:

- provide leadership to the Council;
- recommend bylaws, resolutions, and other measures to Council that, in the Mayor's opinion, may assist the peace, order, and good government of the municipality;
- communicate information to the Council;
- preside at Council meetings when in attendance;
- provide, on behalf of the Council, general direction to municipal officers respecting the implementation of municipal policies, programs, and other directions of the Council;
- [establish standing committees](#);

- [suspend municipal officers and employees](#);
- reflect the will of Council, and to carry out other duties on behalf of the Council;
- to carry out other duties assigned under the *Community Charter* and any other Act; and
- vote on all resolutions and bylaws before Council.

ROLE OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR

The Council must [designate](#) a Councillor(s) as the member responsible for acting in place of the Mayor when the Mayor is absent, or otherwise unable to act, or when the office of Mayor is vacant. Council can choose to re-appoint one Deputy Mayor each year through the term or rotate the Deputy Mayor position among Council on an annual, quarterly, or monthly basis. When in the position of Deputy Mayor, the Councillor has all of the same powers and duties of the Mayor

ETHICS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Responsible conduct refers to how well-elected official conducts themselves when interacting with other elected colleagues, staff, and the public when carrying out their duties as decision-makers of their communities. Elected officials are expected to act fairly, transparent, and accountable manner with the municipality's best interests at the forefront. It is important to gain and maintain public trust and act with integrity. Council members must adhere to provincial legislation and act in accordance with municipal bylaws and policies.

The [Community Charter](#) legislates the requirements of all elected officials in their ethical conduct.

Current and former Directors must keep in confidence:

- any record held in confidence by the District until the record is released to the public as lawfully authorized or required; and
- information considered in any part of a Council or committee meeting that was lawfully closed to the public until the subject is discussed at a meeting that is open to the public or released to the public.

The residents and property owners within the District are entitled to expect fair treatment and ethical behaviour from the elected officials who represent them. Citizens expect their elected officials to acknowledge the requirements of all legislation and abide by its bylaws, policies, and regulations. If the District were to suffer loss or damages because a Councillor contravened the confidentiality provisions of the *Community Charter*, and the infringement was intentional, the District may recover damages from that Councillor for the loss or damage.

RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

It is considered good governance for elected officials to regularly assess their own performance and Council's performance as a whole. In the fall of 2016, the [Working Group on Responsible Conduct](#) of Local Government Elected Officials (WGRC) was created to undertake collaborative research and policy work on the issue of responsible conduct of local government elected officials. The WGRC has identified the critical four foundational principles to guide the conduct of both individual elected officials and the collective Council. The key [foundational principles](#) of responsible conduct for elected officials include:

- integrity;
- accountability;
- respect; and
- leadership and collaboration.

RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE

Council must not engage in any behaviour that could be reasonably interpreted as discriminatory, bullying, harassing in nature, or defamatory towards others, in any context, including in-person, online, through email, or in print. While robust debate and conflicting opinions can be a healthy component of a democratic body, such discussions should occur in a respectful manner that reflects professional conduct. Please familiarize yourself with the main concepts and expectations outlined in the Workplace Policy.

PERSONAL LIABILITY

In the Parliament of Canada or a Provincial Legislature there is a “privilege of immunity” which protects the elected person from libel or slander suits. This does not extend into the Council chamber or the regional district Boardroom. Any remarks made at a Council (or regional Board meeting) could subject the speaker to a libel or slander suit. There is no privilege of immunity. You are responsible for your own words. Councillors should not make defamatory statements, whether inside or outside of Council meetings. You need to be diligent to avoid putting the municipality or yourself at risk of committing an offence or being found liable for civil damages.

Municipalities and Council members are subject to the laws in force in British Columbia. For example, municipalities are subject to workplace safety laws, emergency management laws, environmental laws, and employment laws, among many others. Council management decisions have legal consequences, and Councils should be aware of legal risks in decision-making.

The [Municipal Official and Employee Indemnification Bylaw No. 1064, 2000](#) provides indemnification for members of Council and will pay legal costs against a claim for damages that arises arising out of the performance of their duties, as long as the claim does not arise out of the gross negligence of the member of Council.

THE MUNICIPALITY’S LAWYER IS NOT YOUR LAWYER

The municipality's lawyer takes instructions from the Council as a whole through the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). All legal advice received is privileged and is not to be shared outside of Council. Councillors should be open to advice from the CAO and open to obtaining expert legal advice.

TERM OF OFFICE

[Term of office of Mayor and Councillor](#) is four years and begins the first meeting following the election, ending the first meeting following the general election four years later. In practice, for continuity, the Mayor and Councillors remain in office until their successors have been sworn in.

Any person elected or appointed between general elections to fill a vacancy on Council holds office only for the remainder of the term.

OATH OF OFFICE

Before taking part in your first Council meeting or performing any Councillor duty, you will be required to make and subscribe to the official [oath of office](#). By taking the oath, you swear or promise that you will diligently, faithfully, and to the best of your ability fulfill the duties of the office to which you have been elected.

RESIGNATION FROM OFFICE

For a Council member to [resign](#), a written resignation must be submitted to the Council at a Council meeting or to the corporate officer at any time. The resignation takes effect from the date specified in the resignation or, if no date is specified, the date of delivery. Once delivered, a resignation may not be revoked.

COUNCIL REMUNERATION

Pay cheques for members of Council are prepared quarterly basis (February, May, August, and November) and are deposited electronically into your bank account. The 2021 annual indemnities for members of Council are as follows:

Mayor	\$26,456
Deputy Mayor	\$17,147
Councillor	\$13,655

One-third of the indemnity is a tax-free allowance for expenses incidental to the duties of the office. This portion covers Council members' out-of-pocket expenses (mileage, luncheons, etc.) you might incur while on business within the boundaries of the District of Mackenzie. If you require additional income tax to be deducted, please speak to the payroll Finance Clerk.

REMUNERATION BYLAW

Council determines its remuneration through the [Annual Mayor and Councillor Remuneration and Expenses Bylaw No. 1338, 2015](#), and sequent amendments. If Council increases its remuneration, traditionally it is done in January or February. Additional information can be found in the [Mackenzie Expense Account Regulations Policy](#).

ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAFF

The authority for staff to act arises from bylaws, resolutions, budgets, and corporate plans, all of which require Council approval. The role of local government staff is to implement the direction and decisions set by Council around providing services and programs to their communities.

Duties include:

- communicating with residents and colleagues;
- creating documents;
- keeping records;
- organizing meetings, producing agendas, and taking minutes;
- helping formulate and implement Council policies;
- researching and writing reports;
- liaising with contractors, private companies, partnerships, and other organizations; and
- financial or accounts administration.

Local government corporate powers enable municipalities to enter into the agreements necessary to hire and manage staff. Local governments choose the number and type of staff considered appropriate to meet the needs of their communities and operate within the financial capacity. As employers, local governments can use job descriptions, employment contracts, collective agreements, bylaws, and policies to help clarify officers' and employees' duties, salaries, and benefits. Local governments must also comply with any requirements set in provincial and federal legislation, such as the Employment Standards Act, Workers Compensation Act, and Income Tax Act.

The roles of locally elected officials and local government staff are distinct. A Council member cannot be a staff member of their local government, and a staff member of a local government cannot be one of its Council members. For example, if a staff member of a local government wishes to seek elected office in the municipality in which they work, they must take a leave of absence and, if elected, resign from their staff position

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS

Under the *Community Charter*, municipal Councils have general authority to establish, by bylaw, [officer positions](#) with whatever titles they consider appropriate and assign powers, duties, and functions. The *Community Charter* requires that all municipalities create the following two officer positions:

- one officer responsible for the local government's corporate administration; and,
- one officer responsible for its financial administration.

Local governments may also establish, by bylaw, other officer positions and assign duties the local government considers necessary. Once created, the minimum required responsibilities of the corporate officer, financial officer, and chief administrative officer are specified in various pieces of legislation and by the local government. Although a Council can add duties to either position, these legislated duties are part of the position and cannot be diminished. In smaller local governments, one person may serve in several positions.

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Local government may create the officer position of [Chief Administrative Officer \(CAO\)](#), which includes the overall management of the administrative operation of the municipality.

The *Community Charter* provide for a chief administrative officer to have the following duties:

- manage the local government's operations overall;
- implement the municipal Council's policies, programs, and other directions; and
- advise and inform the Council on the local government's operation and affairs.

Leadership to Administration – CAOs typically serve as the primary point of contact between the Council and the local government's staff. The CAO directs the work of the senior staff and is, therefore, the link between Council and the implementers of Council's direction. The CAO is responsible for appointing or assigning responsibilities to senior staff and for the organization's performance as a whole.

Policy Advice – The CAO is Council's chief policy advisor who ensures that staff provide, in a consistent and coordinated manner, all the information that Council requires to make policy decisions, such as background data, previous actions of Council, relevant corporate plans, budget implications, technical feasibility, legal implications, and information received during public consultation processes. This is done through complete and accurate reports.

A CAO may delegate any of their powers, duties, or functions to a designated officer or an employee. Designated officer positions are established by bylaw and under the CAO's supervision.

CORPORATE OFFICERS

Council may assign additional duties to the corporate officer. If there were no CAO position established in a local government, the corporate officer may also serve as the primary point of contact between the Council and the local government's other staff. Under the *Community Charter*, the [Corporate Officer](#) has the following duties:

- ensure that accurate minutes are prepared for each Council meeting, and committee meetings;
- maintain and keep safe the minutes, bylaws, and other records of the business of the Council and its committees;
- ensure that access is provided to records of the local government's business, as required by law, or authorized by the Council;
- administer oaths and take affirmations, affidavits and declarations as required under provincial legislation;
- certify copies of bylaws and other documents;

- accept notices and documents that are required or permitted to be provided to the local government or its Council; and
- keep the corporate seal of the local government and affix it to documents as required.

FINANCIAL OFFICER

The [financial administrative officer](#) for a local government has the following duties, and may also have others at the direction of Council:

- receive all money paid to the local government;
- ensure all the local government's funds and securities are kept safe;
- invest the local government's funds, until required, in authorized investments;
- expend the local government's money in the manner authorized by the Council;
- prepare and keep accurate records and full accounts of the local government's financial affairs; and
- exercise control and supervision over all other financial affairs of the local government

ELECTION OFFICERS

The administration of local elections is a shared responsibility between local governments and Elections BC. Each municipality is responsible for administering its own general local election, by-election, and assent voting events. A chief election officer and deputy chief election officer are required to be appointed by Council for the purpose of [conducting an election](#).

AUDITOR

Council is required to appoint an Auditor who must not be an employee of the local government and must be a member in good standing of a recognized Association of Accountants. They are responsible for auditing all accounts and transactions of the local government and reporting the annual financial statements to the Council.

ASSISTANT TO THE FIRE COMMISSIONER

The Fire Commissioner is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the Fire Services Act and B.C. Fire Code. [Local Assistants](#) to the Fire Commissioner (LAFC) are appointed within each municipality to assist the fire commissioner in the administration of fire legislation. In most cases, the LAFC is the fire chief or other fire service member of a community fire department. Local police can also fill this role if no LAFC has been appointed by the fire commissioner in any area outside of a municipality. This role has access to the provincial authority of the fire legislation and is accountable to the fire commissioner, not the local government. Mandatory responsibilities for this position include:

- reporting fires;
- creating preliminary fire reports;
- investigating fires in a general way; and
- enforcing provincial fire safety legislation through inspections.

APPROVING OFFICER

For land located within a municipality, Council must appoint an employee as an [Approving Officer](#) to approve subdivisions. Council sets the regulations for subdivisions; however, they cannot direct the Approving Officer to approve or not approve a plan. The Approving Officer is responsible to the Province to carry out the duties as set out in the Acts *Land Title Act*.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION: HEAD OF LOCAL PUBLIC BODY

A municipality, by bylaw, must designate a person or group of persons as the head of the local public body for the purposes of the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#).

SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF OFFICERS

Given the complexities of employment law, local governments may find it beneficial to seek legal counsel before suspending or dismissing an officer. The Mayor has the power to suspend an officer if they consider it necessary. The suspension must be reported to Council at its next meeting. Council then has the option to confirm the suspension, confirm and extend the

suspension, or reinstate or dismiss the officer. An officer must be provided with an opportunity to be heard by the Council before their appointment is terminated. The termination is subject to any contracts of employment and other legal rules that are in effect. A Council may dismiss an officer by terminating their appointment in either of the following ways:

- if for cause, immediately without any period of notice; and
- in any other case, with reasonable notice and a two-thirds affirmative vote of the Council.

LET EMPLOYEES DO THEIR JOBS

In most instances, the CAO is your only employee. All other municipal employees report to the CAO. Staying out of the day-to-day operation of the municipality allows Councillors to concentrate on policymaking and program monitoring. Councillors should work with the CAO to keep Council informed and depend on the administrator to make sound decisions. Effective Councils set policy; they do not micro-manage or perform any administrative duties.

DISTRICT'S DEPARTMENTS

CORPORATE SERVICE

Corporate Services supports Council and ensures the District performs all its legislative duties, including preparing for Council Meeting and administering local elections. In addition, the department is also directly responsible for, and assists other departments with reviewing and creating policies, procedures, and bylaws, legal matters, records management and Freedom of



Information requests, land use agreements, development applications, environmental programs and reporting, communications, as well as community and economic development. The department also works with Council, staff, and the community on long-term strategic planning, including the development of Mackenzie’s Official Community Plan, Zoning Bylaw, Housing Needs Assessments, Economic Development and Tourism Plans, and Corporate and Community Environmental Plans.

FINANCE

The Finance Department is responsible for handling all of the financial affairs of the municipality. These responsibilities include tax collection, accounts receivable and accounts payable, customer service, financial reporting to municipal departments and Council, and payroll. The Finance Department is also responsible for the maintenance of accurate records and accounts of the financial affairs of the municipality, compliance with provincial reporting requirements, and ensuring investments of the District are in accordance with provincial regulations.



FIRE DEPARTMENT AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Fire Department strives to deliver quality services in a fiscally responsible manner to the citizens of the District of Mackenzie. The District of Mackenzie supports this service delivery through a well-established safety and training program. The Fire Department is responsible for fire suppression, vehicle extrication, hazardous material response, environmental protection, fire inspections of multi-residential, public assembly, industrial, and commercial properties, and promoting compliance to the provincial Fire and Building Codes and local municipal bylaws, and public education and awareness.



OPERATIONS

The Public Works Department is responsible for maintaining roads, sidewalks and walkways, boulevards, fire hydrants, public parks and beaches, ball diamonds, and the Municipal Campground. It's also responsible for snow removal, residential and business garbage collection, sewage, and water systems, and maintaining the Municipal Airport.



RECREATION SERVICES

Recreation Services Department oversees the operation and maintenance of the Recreation Centre, Ernie Bodin Community Centre, Little Mac Ski Hill, John Dahl Trail, tennis court and the outdoor rink in Mackenzie. Recreation staff work to enhance the lifestyle and health of people in the community through a variety of quality programs and services based on public consultation. Their dedicated team is committed to providing recreation services for people of all ages, stages, and abilities.



MACKENZIE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Mackenzie Public Library is a lot more than books on shelves! The 43-year-old library is almost as old as the town itself and is dedicated to serving the community with an array of services. Their mission states:

The Mackenzie Public Library is an inclusive community gathering place that inspires lifelong learning, creativity, and personal discovery. Residents and visitors to Mackenzie can access educational programming for all ages (babies to seniors), free computer and internet access, printing, scanning and photocopying services, meeting spaces, online databases and much, much more!

Their new online course database has an extensive collection of self-guided, instructor-led courses that include everything from excel to learning guitar. All that is needed to unlock this is a library card! A true town staple, the Mackenzie Public Library values exceptional customer

service and is always striving to respond to the needs of the community. It consistently evolves with the times to accommodate all who may require their services. Come down or visit them online today to take advantage of all the services the Mackenzie Public Library has to offer!



ANIMAL CONTROL AND BYLAW SERVICES

Bylaws ensure a safe, quiet, and pleasant environment for residents. A Municipal Bylaw Enforcement Officer is employed to investigate concerns such as noise complaints, property standards issues, littering/dumping, fences, and other matters. The goal of Animal Control & Bylaw Services is not to penalize the residents of Mackenzie or visitors to our community. We strive to achieve voluntary compliance through education and the provision of information to preserve the quality of life to which each citizen is entitled. Bylaw Officers are responsible for enforcing District bylaws and respond to questions or concerns regarding:

Animal Control	Noise	Dog & Car Boarding	Graffiti
Garbage Offenses	Parking	Sidewalk/Snow Removal	Unsightly Premises
Municipal Pound	Zoning		



CEMETERY

The Mackenzie Cemetery is a place where you can feel confident your loved one will find peace and serenity. The quiet setting is perfect for friends and family to gather, honour their memories, and celebrate a life well lived. Plot information, fees, and bylaw regulations are available from Corporate Services during the hours of 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Monday to Friday (except statutory holidays) at 250-997-3221.



CONFLICT OF INTEREST

PECUNIARY INTEREST

As a public servant, you are responsible for upholding the public interest ahead of any private interests you may have. These rules are designed to protect the public interest while ensuring that your ability to work is not adversely affected by your election to Council. So that the public interest is served and seen to be served, you must be open and honest about dealing with the municipality. Be fair to yourself, your electors, and your municipality by keeping your private interests in harmony with the public interest.

Pecuniary interest is a matter which could monetarily affect the Councillor or an employer of the Councillor or the Councillor's family. Conflict of interest is when the concerns or aims of two different parties are incompatible or a situation in which a person can derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made in their official capacity.

The *Community Charter* conflict of interest rules provides that locally elected officials who have a financial (pecuniary) interest in a matter that will be discussed or voted on at their municipal

Council meetings must declare that interest in the matter. Following their declaration, they may not participate in discussions, vote, or exercise influence on the matter.

A locally elected official who declares a conflict of interest and then obtains legal advice and determines that they are not in a conflict position may withdraw the original declaration, participate in subsequent discussions, and vote on the matter being considered.

INSIDE INFLUENCE

The *Community Charter* prohibits an elected official from using their office to attempt to [influence the local government's decision](#) if that elected official has a direct or indirect pecuniary (financial) interest in the matter.

OUTSIDE INFLUENCE

The *Community Charter* prohibits an elected official who has a direct or indirect pecuniary (financial) interest in a matter from using their office to attempt to [influence a decision](#) of any other person or body.

EXCEPTIONS FROM CONFLICT RESTRICTIONS

The *Community Charter* provides some [exceptions to the restrictions on conflict of interest](#) and inside and outside influence, such as:

- an elected official's pecuniary interest is an interest in common with the electors of the jurisdiction;
- an elected official's pecuniary interest, related to a local service, is in common with other persons who are or would be liable for the local service tax;
- a matter under consideration relates to the remuneration, expenses, or benefits payable to elected officials in their capacity as members of that elected body;
- the pecuniary interest is so remote or insignificant that it cannot reasonably be viewed as likely to influence the elected official;

- an elected official has a legal right to be heard in respect of a matter or to make representations to the elected body, in which case the official may appoint a representative to exercise that right; and
- the pecuniary interest or conflict is allowed through a regulation.

EXCEPTIONS

[Conflict of Interest Exceptions Regulation](#) allows elected local government officials to be appointed by their local government to serve on a specific society or corporate Boards without risk of disqualification based on financial conflict of interest simply because of their appointment. Appointments to society and corporate Boards must be made by the Council. When those representatives are officially appointed by their local governments, they will not be in a pecuniary conflict of interest simply because of their appointment when discussing and voting on matters concerning the society or corporation at meetings of the local government.

GIFTS

The *Community Charter* prohibits an elected official from directly or indirectly accepting a [gift, fee or personal benefit](#) that is connected in some way to their performance as an elected official unless it is one of the following:

- a gift or benefit that is received as an incident of the protocol or social obligations that normally accompany the responsibilities of office;
- compensation authorized by law; and
- a lawful campaign contribution.

The *Community Charter* requires elected officials to disclose any permitted gift or benefit worth more than \$250. This does not include gifts that are personal and not connected to the official's performance as an elected official. If the combined value of lesser gifts from one source over any 12-month period exceeds \$250, those gifts must also be disclosed.

CONTRACTS

The *Community Charter* requires public disclosure of any contract in which an elected official, or a person who was an elected official within the previous six months, has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest. Current or former elected officials are required to advise the local government's corporate officer as soon as reasonably practicable of any such contracts. This requirement applies to contracts between the District and a current or former elected official and contracts between the District and persons or companies with whom the elected official is connected. It could also include contracts where the elected official's spouse or other close relative is the party that contracts with the District.

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS

The BC Financial Disclosure Act requires elected local government officials to complete and submit to the Corporate Officer a Financial Disclosure Statement by January 15th of each year so that it may be made available for public inspection. The purpose of this Financial Disclosure Statement is to identify any areas of influence and possible financial benefits an elected official may have by their position and to ensure the public has reasonable access to the information. Information to be included on the form includes corporations in which you hold shares, creditors to whom you owe a debt (it is not necessary to list the amount), organizations from which you receive financial remuneration, and land owned (excluding your residence) within the regional district. If circumstances change throughout the year, a new Financial Disclosure Statement must be filed with the Corporate Officer.

PENALTIES

A locally elected official who has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in a matter and contravenes the ethical standard's provisions in the *Community Charter* may be disqualified from holding public office. The exceptions are if the infringement was done inadvertently or because of an error in judgement made in good faith. The [Community Charter](#) sets out that an elected official who is disqualified cannot run until the next general local election if the Supreme Court of B.C. finds them in contravention of these rules setting ethical standards.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA) applies to all local governments in B.C. FOIPPA mandates that some information must be kept confidential, and some information must be released upon request. All information received, sent, stored, or collected by a municipality is public information unless it falls within the limited exceptions under the FOIP Act. This applies to email and electronic records too.

The municipally appointed Freedom of Information & Privacy Coordinator receives and processes FOI requests in accordance with FOIPPA legislation. If specific records in the care and control of individual Council members or records that were addressed, received, or created by Council are requested, staff will work with Council to obtain copies to respond to the request

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council meetings are the means by which Council conducts business. Council [meetings](#) are gatherings where municipal Council members make decisions or move toward making decisions.

A municipal Council meeting is generally a gathering that:

- all members of the Council are invited to, and
- the information discussed will be used by Council to make a decision.

Councils are required to conduct their business in meetings that are [open to the public](#) to facilitate transparency and accountability of the Council. This ensures that the public can hear the debate and know what was decided. As these are business meetings, the public's participation is restricted to allow Council the space in which to make decisions. Council meetings are not intended as the forum by which Council engages with the public. Council meetings follow the rules and regulations outlined in the *Community Charter*.

CLOSED MEETINGS

The District of Mackenzie may close part of or all of a meeting for the purpose of discussing confidentiality by all those present. The [Community Charter](#) identifies the specific times a Council

meeting may or must be closed to the public. Closed resolutions or information may be released to the public by Council resolution.

Closed meetings are not stand-alone meetings – they must be held within an adequately convened Regular or Special meeting. If held, Closed Council meetings typically begin after the Regular or Special meeting. Public Hearings are typically held at the beginning of Regular Council meetings as necessary



COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE

Regular Council meetings are held as identified on the annual schedule. An annual Council meeting schedule is formally adopted in a Regular Council meeting and advertised on the District's website. Changes to the schedule may only be formalized by Council resolution.

The District of Mackenzie Regular Council meetings are generally held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. During certain times of the year, meetings may vary to accommodate summer and holiday schedules and Council conferences such as the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM). Public Hearings, Closed and Special meetings are held as required.

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

Councils can also hold special meetings in addition to regular meetings. Special meetings are usually held when important or unforeseen business arises that needs to be dealt with before the next regular meeting.

ATTENDANCE AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

Councillors have a legislative responsibility to attend Council meetings. If a Council member is unable to attend, they should provide notice to the CAO and Corporate Officer to ensure that quorum will be met.

The [Community Charter](#) limits the number of meetings an individual Council member may miss before being removed from Council. A Council member is disqualified from Council and must resign their seat if they are absent from all regular Council meetings held during a period of 60 consecutive days, or four consecutive regularly scheduled Council meetings (whichever is longer) unless Council has authorized the absence by resolution.

ELECTRONIC MEETINGS

Council meetings may be conducted electronically, such as over the phone or through video conferencing. This provides an option to accommodate Council members who are unable to attend the meeting in person due to work or other responsibilities. Councillors who are participating in a meeting by means of electronic are deemed to be present at the meeting. The facilities must at minimum enable the meeting participants to hear each other, and the public to hear the meeting. Provisions regarding electronic meetings are found in the [Council Procedure Bylaw No. 1379, 2018](#).

COUNCIL PROCEDURE BYLAW NO. 1379, 2018

Council must have a current procedure bylaw that establishes the general procedures to follow and committees when conducting Council business. This bylaw includes provisions for public notice of meetings, delegations to Council, bylaws, motions, rules of conduct and debate, minutes, and committees. The District of Mackenzie Council meetings follows the rules and regulations outlined in the *Community Charter*, the *Local Government Act* (LGA), and the District of Mackenzie's [Council Procedure Bylaw No. 1379, 2018](#).

A Council Procedure Bylaw establishes written rules for conducting business at meetings for Council members, administrators, and the public to follow.

PROTOCOL AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

Upon arrival at a Regular, Special, or Closed Council meeting, Council members and staff are expected to act professionally and respectfully. The Mayor is the presiding official at all Council meetings (unless absent when the Deputy Mayor or another designate would assume the role) and maintains order at the meeting.

Council meetings follow a formal process with many traditional aspects. Their proper titles shall refer to Council members and staff. The Mayor conducts and keeps order at the meeting, and all speaking shall be done through the Mayor. For example, if a Council member or staff member wishes to comment on an agenda item, they must wait to be acknowledged by the Mayor to speak. All comments are to be directed to the presiding official.

QUORUM

Council meetings require a majority (50 percent plus one) of Council to be present before a meeting convenes and at all times during the meeting. There are exceptions to requirements for quorum when a member declares a conflict of interest and withdraws from a meeting. A Council member who participates electronically is considered present at the meeting.

VOTING

Council decisions are decided by the vote of the members present. It is important to make resolutions and vote on matters Council debates, even if Council chooses to do nothing so that the public has a record that Council has considered the topic.

Disagreements among Council members on specific issues are common. There will be many occasions where a decision is made that you did not support with your vote. However, once the resolution has been passed, it becomes the official direction of the municipality. The health and ongoing success of a municipality are primarily dependent upon the ability of Councillors to respect and support the Council's decisions in principle, despite your personal views during the debate.

GENERAL VOTING RULES

Each Council member has one vote on any question. If there is a tie vote, the vote on the bylaw or resolution is defeated. Council's [voting rules](#) apply to Council committees. Every member of Council present at the meeting, including the Mayor, must vote on every question. You cannot abstain from voting unless you have a conflict of interest. If you abstain from voting for any other reason, legislation deems your vote as a vote in the negative

In general, a majority vote of Council is required to pass a resolution or bylaw. In some circumstances, a two-thirds majority of all of the Council is required, and not merely those present for the vote. Examples include:

- providing assistance to business for the conservation of [heritage properties](#);
- [dedication of park land or heritage properties](#);
- [termination of officers for no cause](#);
- resolution to make [application to disqualify a Council member](#); and
- providing [tax exemptions](#) to heritage, riparian, and partnering properties.

AGENDAS

The Council agenda is prepared, and access to the agenda is available the Thursday before a Regular Council meeting. Notice of agendas are emailed to Council, available on the District's website, and printed copies are available to the public at meetings.

It is crucial that all members of Council and staff members present at the meeting have reviewed their agenda package to ensure that they understand the decisions to be made at the Council

meeting. If Council has any questions about items on the agenda, they are encouraged to contact the Mayor or CAO prior to the meeting to seek clarification. Any additional information provided to a Council member for clarification will also be provided to all other Council members prior to the meeting or will be explained verbally at the meeting. Late items may be added to a supplemental agenda if approved by the CAO before the commencement of the Regular Council meeting. If items are not time-sensitive, they will be added to the next regular Council agenda to give Council and the public adequate time to review and consider the item.

COUNCIL MINUTES

Council meeting minutes summarize the proceedings and the decisions made by Council at official Council meetings. A recording secretary is present during each Council meeting. Once the minutes are prepared, they are included on a Council Agenda for review, amendments if necessary, and formal adoption by Council.

Council minutes are retained permanently, as required by the *Community Charter*, to ensure that a complete account of the District's governance is maintained. The *Community Charter* assigns [responsibility](#) to the Corporate Officer to prepare and maintain accurate minutes of all Council and Council committee meetings and requires that these minutes, except for closed meeting minutes, be made available for [public inspection](#). Once the minutes are adopted, they are certified by the Corporate Officer and the Mayor, and the original copy is filed at the municipal office.

PUBLIC PARTICIPTION

The public is welcome and encouraged to attend all open Council meetings. As these are business meetings, the public's participation is restricted to allow Council the space in which to make decisions. Council meetings are not intended as the forum by which Council engages with the public.

DELEGATIONS

Delegations may request or be invited to attend Council meetings and present to Council. Each delegation has 10 minutes to present to Council, not including the Council question period. It is essential that the same procedures and processes are followed with each delegation to ensure fairness and equality. Council does not provide a response to any request made by a delegation at the meeting at which the delegation presented. A response is provided at the subsequent meeting, allowing staff time to prepare information to guide the Council response.

COUNCIL COMMITTEES, BOARDS, AND OTHER BODIES

Municipalities may establish committees, commissions, and Boards as well as external appointments. Committees, commissions, and other bodies must adhere to the Council Procedure Bylaw regarding minute taking and must adhere to the Open Meeting requirements established in the *Community Charter*.

COMMITTEES

The general purpose of committees is not to establish policy but to act in an advisory capacity to Council. The decision-making responsibility and authority remain with Council. The *Community Charter* defines two types of committees – Standing and Select. There are three primary differences between these:

- by whom they are established (Council or the Mayor);
- the ratio or number of Council members required on the committee (at least half, or at least one); and
- the permanency or temporariness of the committee, depending on its purpose.

STANDING COMMITTEES

[Standing Committees](#) are established by the Mayor for matters the Mayor considers would be better dealt with by the committee, and the Mayor appoints persons to those committees. At least half of the members on a standing committee must be Council members. Standing committees report back to Council.

SELECT COMMITTEES

[Select Committees](#) are established by Council to consider or inquire into any matter and to report its findings and opinion to the Council. At least one member of a select committee must be a Council member.

COMMISSIONS

[Municipal Commissions](#) are established by the Council to operate services and undertake operation and enforcement in relation to the Council's exercise of its authority to regulate, prohibit, and impose requirements or manage property and licenses held by the municipality.

BOARD OF VARIANCE

Under the [LGA](#), a local government that had adopted a zoning bylaw must establish one or more Boards of variance to allow people to request relief from provisions of that bylaw. Members of an advisory planning commission or officers or employees of the local government are prohibited from being appointed to a Board of variance. The Board may grant a variance if they find that compliance with the bylaw would cause undue hardship relating to matters such as siting, dimensions, and size of buildings. The jurisdiction of a Board of Variance is narrow, as it may only consider applications in which hardship is alleged if requirement to certain prescribed bylaws, subdivision servicing

PARCEL TAX REVIEW PANEL

Before a parcel tax is imposed for the first time, [a parcel tax roll review panel](#) must be established to consider any complaints respecting the parcel tax roll and must authenticate the roll.

LIBRARY BOARD

If a municipality provides a municipal library, it must establish a library corporation and approve the appointment of members to the Library Board as established in the *Library Act*.

EX OFFICIO EXTERNAL BOARD AND COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

An ex officio member is a member of a body who is part of it by virtue of holding another office. In other words, the Council is required to appoint one or more members to these bodies. According to Robert's Rules of Order the term denotes only how one becomes a member of a body. Accordingly, the rights of an ex officio member are exactly the same as other members unless otherwise stated in regulations or bylaws. "Ex officio" is often understood to mean "non-voting" but this is incorrect. Some ex officio appointments include appointments to the following:

- the Regional District Board;
- the Regional Hospital District Board;
- the Municipal Insurance Association; and
- the Northern Development Initiative Trust Regional Advisory Committee.

GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS

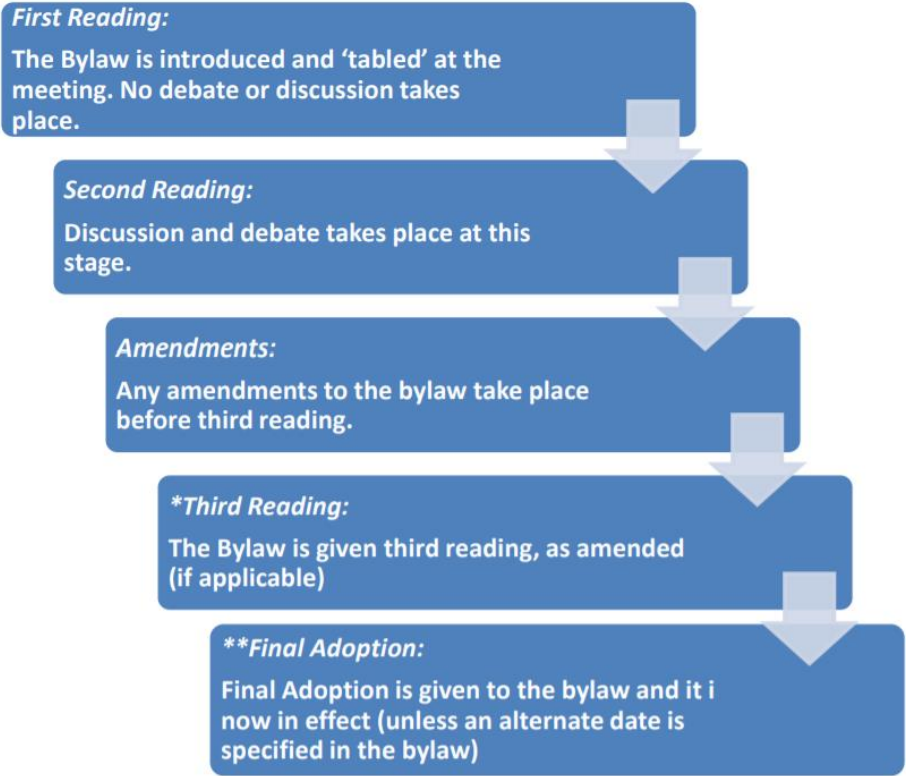
COUNCIL RESOLUTION

A resolution (also known as a motion) is a formal proposal by an individual Councillor, in an official Council meeting, that the Council as a whole, and in turn the organization, take a certain action. Before a subject can be considered, it must be placed before Council for consideration in the form of a resolution moved by one Councillor, seconded by another, and voted on by all Council members (including the Mayor). A resolution may be amended, withdrawn, tabled, reconsidered, or rescinded. Resolutions usually deal with routine or administrative matters.

BYLAWS

A bylaw is a law that legally implements a decision made by a municipal Council. A bylaw is typically necessary for a local government to take actions that direct what persons may, may not or must do. A Council must adopt a bylaw to regulate, prohibit or impose requirements in relation to a service, or impose a municipal property tax or fee. If the legislation specifies that something must be done by bylaw, it may only be done by bylaw. If the legislation does not specify how a power is to be exercised, the Council may use a resolution or bylaw.

Bylaws are adopted, and resolutions are passed by votes at any legally convened meeting of a Council, subject to the limitation that bylaws may not be voted on or adopted at closed (in-camera) meetings. Before a bylaw is adopted by a municipal Council, it must be voted on at three readings by the Council. Amendments to the Bylaw must be made before third reading. For some bylaws, certain requirements must be met between the readings and before adoption, such as approval of the electors or approval by the Inspector of Municipalities. Bylaws are permanent documents, and the municipality is required to retain a copy of all bylaws that have been passed and/or repealed by Council.



POLICIES

The importance of policies is paramount in providing consistency and transparency to the CAO and the taxpayer. Most successful municipalities maintain a policy manual with an index to enable easy reference. Council approved policies and should be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure they are still relevant.



MACKENZIE IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

WE ♥ LOCAL!

The District of Mackenzie has and continues to offer various programs, dedicated personnel, and incentives to support local economic development. These are outlined in the table below:

[Business Façade Improvement Program](#) - Annual financial support offered to local businesses to cover the costs of improving their curbside appeal (ex. Paint, signage, etc.)

[Love Mackenzie](#) - A program that encourages people to shop locally by identifying branding and promoting locally owned businesses

District of Mackenzie Economic Development Department - Includes a dedicated Economic Development Coordinator.

[Mackenzie Chamber of Commerce](#) - Local group, dedicated to actively promoting the interests of its member businesses and the community.

[Community Futures Fraser-Fort George](#) - A community-based economic renewal initiative that helps locals start or expand a business and helps sustain and improve communities and their local economies through various programs and services.

[Mackenzie Community & Investment Profile 2020](#) - Directed towards potential investors, this document contains information highlighting the benefits of and incentives for investing in Mackenzie, including demographics, utilities, permits and licensing, resources, quality of life, etc.)

["Experience Mackenzie" Visitors Guide 2018](#) - Directed towards visitors and potential future residents, this document contains information highlighting Mackenzie's history, summer, and winter recreational opportunities.

[Mackenzie Branding Initiative](#) - Background research and analysis on the community's history, demographics, assets, and constraints, etc., as well as a community survey fed into the development of Mackenzie's brand. This visual identity is used to help convey Mackenzie's personality, spirit, values, and best attributes and is used on all marketing communications and community development materials.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT



The *Community Charter* provides municipalities with most of their powers to regulate buildings and other structures, as well as other powers related to planning, such as tree protection authority and concurrent authority for protection of the natural environment. Municipalities cannot use the fundamental powers provided by the *Community Charter* to do anything specifically authorized under [LGA Part 14](#)

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

Municipalities in British Columbia are given the authority to adopt an OCP Plan through the B.C. *Local Government Act*. The Official Community Plan ([OCP](#)) establishes a long-term vision for our community's future and describes its broad objectives. It reflects the ideas and input of participants in the planning process, including residents, landowners, planning professionals, senior government agencies, and elected officials. The District of Mackenzie's OCP was adopted August 12, 2014, with a focus on the following land use and development long term goals:

- Fiscal Health - A balanced District budget and healthy cash flow.
- Economy - A diverse, stable economy and job base.
- Business Community - A strong, community-supported local business community.
- Attractiveness - An authentic, attractive community.
- Climate and Energy - Significantly reduced District and community carbon emissions.
- Natural Environment - Clean air, clean water, and healthy ecosystems.
- Community - A strong community that supports one another.
- Recreation and Entertainment - Exceptional indoor and outdoor recreational and entertainment opportunities.

- Housing - Housing choice that meets the needs of all residents.
- Health Care and Social Services - Sufficient health care and social services.
- Education - Good educational opportunities for residents.

LAND USE POLICIES AND BYLAWS

Land use impacts how the District looks, feels, and operates. Growth and development within the District of Mackenzie are guided by land use planning policies and bylaws related to the provision of infrastructure, services, and amenities and through the regulation of land use and development. Promoting compact, mixed-use, and high-quality development will help protect our natural areas and foster a convenient, walkable, and livable community.

All land within the community and industrial site is given a land use zone, through the [Zoning Bylaw No. 1368](#), and related amendments. A zoning bylaw may divide the whole or part of an area into zones, name each zone and establish the boundaries of those zones. Each zone outlines the permitted uses of buildings within an area. The District utilizes these documents to guide decision-making processes for development and land use in the community. Zoning bylaws (and OCPs) require a public hearing before adoption.

SUBDIVISION OF LAND

Subdivision means the division of any area of land into two or more parcels. This includes and is not limited to the:

- creation of several lots from one or more parcels;
- creation of strata lots;
- readjustment of an existing property line; and
- consolidation of properties.

Council must establish the subdivision authority by bylaw. [Subdivision Bylaw 780](#) regulates and sets out the requirements needed as part of the subdivision of land.

PUBLIC PROCESS REQUIRMENTS

The LGA legislates that the local government must, during the development, repeal, or amendment of an OCP, provide one or more [opportunities for consultation](#) with persons, organizations, or authorities the local government considers would be affected. These include: the adjacent regional district and municipality; First Nations; school Boards; greater Boards, and improvement district Boards; and provincial and federal government departments and their agencies

The LGA requires public hearings for the types of bylaws that have the greatest potential to affect how people use their property are required. A public hearing, together with the related public notice and information requirements, must occur in an open session. Zoning and OCPs require public hearings.

The role of the public hearing is to provide an opportunity for the public to convey its views to Council. It is a venue for hearing, not debating. Care must be taken that the rules of procedure are fair to all and are applied even-handedly. Any information that Council will be using for its decision-making must be made available for the public to review before the public hearing. Any person who believes that their interests would be affected by the bylaw being considered has a right to be heard at the public hearing. These individuals do not need to be a resident within the jurisdiction or own nearby property.

PARTICIPATION IN REGIONAL DISTRICT PLANNING

The LGA gives municipalities the choice [to opt in or opt out](#) of regional district planning. If a municipality has not given notice to the regional district that they do not wish to participate, or if they have not established an agreement with the regional district Board to participate on a limited basis, the municipality will share the cost of the planning function and vote on land use management decisions.

COUNCIL'S ROLE IN FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Almost everything the municipality is engaged in will have a cost associated with it. You will spend a lot of time assessing the financial implications of Council policy decisions. You will need to balance the desire for municipal services with the amount of property taxes and user fees that the local residents are willing to pay for those services.

FINANCIAL PLANNING AND ACCOUNTING

The total amount of taxes to be raised for municipal purposes in a particular year will be determined by Council and set out in its financial plan bylaw. Municipalities must annually adopt, by bylaw, a five-year financial plan, which includes capital and operating items. The financial plan must set out the projected revenue and expenditures for the upcoming year, plus objectives and policies of the municipality in relation to:

- the proportion of total revenue that is proposed to come from each funding source;
- the distribution of property value taxes among the property classes that will be subject to the tax; and
- the use of permissive tax exemptions.

Proposed expenditures and transfers to other funds for a year cannot exceed the total of the proposed funding sources and transfers from other funds. In other words, the financial plan cannot show a deficit in any year. Before adopting the financial plan, Council must have undertaken a public [consultation process](#) regarding the proposed plan. For each of the five years in the financial plan, the plan must show:

- the proposed expenditures, including separate amounts for each of interest and principal on debt, amounts required for capital purposes, the amount required for a deficiency, and the amount required for other purposes; and
- the proposed funding sources, including separate amounts for each of revenue from property value taxes, parcel taxes, fees, and other sources, and proceeds from borrowing (other than revenue anticipation borrowing); and

- the proposed transfers between funds, including separate amounts for each reserve fund and accumulated surplus.

LIMITS ON EXPENDITURES

The financial plan is the primary authority for the municipality to spend. The local government must not make an [expenditure](#) other than one authorized for that year in its financial plan or an emergency.

EMERGENCIES

Council may establish procedures to authorize and report on [emergency expenditures](#). Once these procedures are in place, the municipality may make an emergency expenditure not contemplated in its financial plan. If emergency expenditures are required, the financial plan must be amended as soon as practicable after the expenditure has been made.

DISQUALIFICATION AND LIABILITY

Council members who vote for bylaws or resolutions that authorize the expenditure, investment, or other use of money [contrary to the provisions](#) of the *Community Charter*, may be exposed to personal liability and disqualification from office.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND AUDIT

The chief financial officer must prepare [financial statements](#), which must be presented to the Council for acceptance. The Council must appoint an [auditor](#), who must [report](#) on the financial statements. Financial statements must be prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles for local governments. These principles are established by the Public Sector Accounting Board of the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada.

ANNUAL REPORTS

Every municipality in B.C. produces an Annual Report each year to highlight accomplishments of the previous year and plans for the upcoming year. The report also provides the audited financial

statements of the previous year. Community members are invited to comment on the annual report prior to Council adopting the plan each year.

The District of Mackenzie's Annual Report is also a progress report card to the community on specific goals developed by the community and set by Council in the 2017-2020 Council Priorities strategic planning process. [View the 2020 Annual Report](#)

SEPARATE FUNDS AND CONSOLIDATION

"Funds" are a way of segregating financial and accounting transactions. Separate funds tend to be used in order to keep track of how money from certain sources is used or to provide information about the cost of a particular service or activity and how those costs are recovered. A separate fund does not necessarily mean that money relating to the fund must be held in a separate bank account. In some cases, segregation in banking is either required or desired to simplify calculations such as interest earned on the funds.

[Reserve Funds](#) may be set up, by bylaw, to hold money for certain future purposes. The bylaw establishing the reserve fund will set out the purpose, either operating or capital. Establishment of reserve funds is generally a local choice. However, some circumstances require a separate reserve fund, such as money received from the imposition of development cost charges or from certain property dispositions.

Trust Funds are set up for the purpose of accounting for money and/or property received and held by the local government as trustee, custodian, or agent. A trust fund is usually in existence over a long period of time. Separate accounts should be maintained for the transactions in each trust fund.

Reserve Accounts - Certain contractual arrangements may require that separate funds be established. For example, a grant program may require a separate accounting for grant funds. In addition, some local governments may choose to provide an internal accounting framework that

further segregates portions of accumulated surplus into separate funds according to local requirements and preferences, such as separate operating and capital funds for water or sewer services.

The accounting treatment providing segregation into such funds is for internal management purposes, and the financial and accounting reports produced may look very different from the audited financial statements. This is because the audited financial statements are presented on a consolidated basis, as required by the Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB). Consolidation is essentially a method of adding together the various funds and reporting on them on an aggregated basis. The PSAB requirement provides consolidation of most accounting transactions, although there are some exceptions to this general rule.

REVENUE SOURCES

Local governments obtain their revenues from various principal sources.

Taxes on real property (land and improvements), including property value taxes and parcel taxes, as well as grants in lieu of taxes.

Fees and charges for services, including such things as fees for the use of local government facilities, fees for services such as water or sewer, and fees in relation to various regulatory activities, such as inspection and permitting.

Development Cost Charges support the cost of infrastructure needed to service future development and include development cost charges, latecomer agreements; development works agreements, and parkland acquisition charges.

Transfers or grants from other governments, which include both conditional and unconditional grants. Conditional transfers are payments to local governments that are restricted in some way, generally with respect to the use of the funding (e.g., funding must be used towards a specific project or program). Unconditional transfers do not have such restrictions, and local governments may choose where the funding will be used. The largest unconditional grant programs are the Small Community Grants, Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing, and the Peace River MOU.



EXPENSES

Local governments may provide a range of services (e.g., policing, fire protection, parks, recreation, garbage collection, water supply, treatment and distribution, sewage collection and treatment, local roads). Undertaking most of these services and regulatory activities is at the discretion of individual local governments. Still, if a local government chooses to provide the service or regulation, it will incur expenses in relation to the activity. In general, the authority to incur an expense is derived from an approved financial plan. However, there are also a number of legislative restrictions on certain types of expenses.

ASSESSMENT

Property assessment is the process of assigning a dollar value to a property for taxation purposes. Property taxation depends upon two different but interrelated mechanisms:

- establishment of property values for land and improvements, which is the exclusive responsibility of the [B.C. Assessment Authority](#); and

- establishment of a tax rate which, when multiplied by the property value, will raise the appropriate amount of property taxes.

B.C. Assessment is responsible for establishing the assessed value for all land and improvements in the province for property taxation purposes. Assessors must consider several factors in establishing a property's assessed value, such as use, selling price of comparable land and improvements, revenue, or rental value. In addition, the method of valuation may be different for different types or classes of property. For example, while property in Class 6 (Business and Other) is valued at market value, improvements in Class 4 (Major Industry) are valued on a cost-less depreciation basis.



Residential



Industrial, Commercial and Investment (ICI)



Farm

CLASSIFICATION

BC Assessment classifies properties into one or more of the [nine property classes](#) set out in Assessment Act regulations. As a general rule, the tax rate for all properties within a property class must be the same, but tax rates for properties in different classes may be different. Taxing jurisdictions customarily set different tax rates for each of the property classes. The classes are as follows:

Class 1.	Residential	Class 6.	Business and Other
Class 2.	Utility	Class 7.	Managed Forest
Class 3.	Supportive Housing	Class 8.	Recreation/Non-profit
Class 4.	Major Industry	Class 9.	Farm
Class 5.	Light Industry		

EXEMPTIONS

Property may be exempted in whole or in part from taxation. Exemption provisions are complex; some of the highlights are:

- a number of mandatory exemptions are provided in the [Community Charter](#), such as properties owned by the municipality, buildings used for public worship and property of a public library;
- properties owned by the Federal and Provincial governments; and
- some property owned by a [utility company](#) is exempt from general taxation but subject to a 1% utility revenue tax in lieu.

PERMISSIVE EXEMPTIONS

Municipalities have the opportunity to exempt certain properties from taxation at the discretion of individual municipal Councils. Properties eligible for [permissive exemptions](#) are generally limited to those owned by not for profit organizations, although exemptions may be provided in very limited circumstances to properties owned by a business.

ASSESSMENT ROLLS

Assessment rolls are produced annually by B.C. Assessment. The assessor must, before October 31, supply to each municipality a preview roll and estimate of the total assessed value of each property class within the municipality. On or before December 31, the assessor must complete a new assessment roll containing a list of each property within a municipality or rural area and mail a notice to each person named on the roll.

TAXATION

Municipalities collect property taxes for themselves and other public authorities, such as school districts and regional districts. Property taxes levied are a product of the assessed value of the property and a tax rate to be applied to that assessed value. Assessed values are determined by

the B.C. Assessment Authority Tax rates to be applied to these assessed values are set in accordance with the budgeting process each year.

VARIABLE TAX RATE SYSTEM

The variable tax rate system classifies properties into one of nine property classes for Councils to set a tax rate and levy taxes for municipal purposes. A tax rate is defined as an amount per each \$1,000 of assessed value. The tax rate may vary between property classes but must be the same for all properties within a class. By considering a unique tax rate for each property class, Council determines the appropriate share of taxes to be borne by each of the property classes, allowing Council to decide the amount of tax to be raised each year and the amounts that will be raised from each class of property.

TAX RATE BYLAW

Once the financial plan is adopted, Council must determine how much of the projected taxation revenue will be provided by each of the nine property classes and set tax rates necessary to recover these amounts. Councils must adopt their tax rate bylaw by [May 15](#) each year, after which officials prepare property tax notices, distribute them to property owners, and begin the process of collections.

LIMITS ON TAX RATES

Municipalities have considerable legislative discretion to set a separate tax rate for each of the nine property classes. These rates reflect amounts needed by Council to recover projected taxation revenue from the financial plan. However, the Province has the authority to apply its own limits on tax rates and ratios.

MUNICIPALITY AS TAX COLLECTOR

For administrative ease, all taxes imposed on a particular property are collected by one entity. The amount of taxes collected by municipalities on behalf of other taxing jurisdictions can be

significant. In some cases, almost half of the overall tax bill for a property within a municipality can be for non-municipal use.

HOMEOWNER GRANTS

A [Homeowner Grant program](#) offers grants to owner-occupiers of residential properties to offset part of their school property tax burden. In practice, the Province pays the grants directly to the tax collector on behalf of the property owners and is applied to school taxes first, then to municipal or other taxes. The Homeowner Grant threshold is currently \$1.625 million (2021). If the residential value or partitioned value of a property is over the threshold, the grant amount is reduced by \$5 for each \$1,000 value over the threshold. The threshold is reviewed each year as part of the provincial budget process.

TAX PAYMENT CALENDAR

The *Community Charter* provides a general tax collection scheme under which taxes are due on July 2, and the Province sets [penalties](#) and interest rates for unpaid taxes. Councils may also choose to offer an [alternative tax collection scheme](#), where the Council establishes one or more dates on which taxes become due, and may establish discounts, penalties and interest in relation to taxes. In that case, [owners can choose](#) to pay in accordance with the alternative scheme or the general scheme.

MUNICIPAL BORROWING

SHORT TERM CAPITAL BORROWING

A municipality may borrow for 5 years or less for any purpose of a capital nature. The maximum that may be borrowed under these provisions is \$50 per capita. The borrowing must be undertaken by bylaw approved by the [Inspector of Municipalities](#). There is no requirement for elector approval to the bylaw.

LONG TERM BORROWING

Long-term debt may be used to finance capital expenditures or provide funding for a limited number of other uses, such as complying with a court order. All long-term borrowing must be undertaken through adoption of a [loan authorization bylaw](#) approved by the Inspector of Municipalities. The maximum term of the debt is the lesser of 30 years or the reasonable life expectancy of the capital asset or the term of any related agreement. Many loan authorization bylaws require elector approval. Long-term borrowing for the District must be undertaken through the regional district, which in turn borrows from the Municipal Finance Authority.

REVENUE ANTICIPATION BORROWING

The *Community Charter* allows municipalities to borrow, based on [revenue anticipation](#), to meet the operating needs of the municipality. Revenue anticipation borrowing is not a method to finance long-term needs or capital items. The municipality must not borrow more than the amount of unpaid taxes imposed during the current year and the money remaining due from other governments. If the borrowing takes place before the adoption of the property tax bylaw, the amount that can be borrowed is limited to 75% of the preceding year's tax levy. If there is revenue anticipation borrowing outstanding, revenue from property taxes must be used first to repay that borrowing.

LOCAL INDIGENOUS BANDS, COUNCILS, AND NATIONS

First Nations Bands, Councils and Nations offer many services to their members throughout the traditional territories. They may offer Health Services, Housing, Education Services, Water, Sewer and other Utilities, Lands and Resources, Fisheries & Wildlife, Human and Social Services and Treaty Negotiations. First Nations communities are governed Federally, although more flexibility for provincial and local influence and participation has been created.

MACLEOD LAKE INDIAN BAND

The [McLeod Lake Indian Band](#) is part of the Tse'khene group of Aboriginal peoples that also includes bands at Fort Ware (Kwadacha) and Ingenika (Tseh Kay Dene). The main community of McLeod Lake Band is located on McLeod Lake Indian Band Indian Reserves #1 and #5 near the unincorporated village of McLeod Lake, approximately 150 kilometers north of Prince George on Highway 97. McLeod Lake Band Membership totals about 515 members with approximately 100 members living in McLeod Lake, 200 members living in Mackenzie, Chetwynd and Prince George, and the rest throughout North America.

The Tse'khene is a south westerly extension of the Athapaskan speaking people of northern Canada. They were nomadic hunting people who controlled the basins of the Parsnip and Finley Rivers and the valley of the Peace River in British Columbia. Living on the edge of the Rocky Mountains, they are the "*People of the Rocks*". The language of the Tse'khene belongs to the Beaver-Sarcee-Tse'khene branch of Athapaskan. The traditional territory of McLeod Lake Tse'khene is approximately 108,000 square kilometers.

HALFWAY RIVER FIRST NATION

[Halfway River First Nation](#) was originally located on the Chowade River. Through a relocation into IR 168, Halfway River First Nation became situated where they are today, north of the Halfway River approximately 75km northwest of Fort St John. The Halfway River First Nation takes pride in their heritage and culture. Keeping close ties to the Dane-Zaa language that they speak, the traditional practices that are passed and to the land that gave abundantly through their seasonal rounds, Halfway River First Nation continues to forge ahead protecting and respecting their land and history while developing further opportunity for their people.

SAULTEAU FIRST NATIONS

[Saulteau First Nations](#) is located in Moberly Lake. The Saulteau (Anishinabe), Nehiyaw (Cree) and Mountain Dunne-Za (Beaver) people have existed together prior to adhering to Treaty 8 in 1914. The Saulteau people migrated from southern Manitoba led by their spiritual prophet who was

guided to this location. An agreement was reached with the Dunne-Za to co-exist and live-in peace. The Nehiyawak arrived in different phases and since they already had a foothold as trading partners in the fur trade, theirs became the language of commerce. The Cree language eventually became the primary local language. Today they are bound by their collective history, worldviews, ancient unwritten laws and kinship through intermarriage. They maintain their own unique forms of governance, spiritual traditions and connection to land that predates the forming of Canada.

WEST MOBLERY FIRST NATIONS

Located in Peace River Country, on Moberly Lake, [West Moberly First Nations](#) seek to positively enhance the progression of West Moberly First Nations ethics with respect, honesty, fairness, integrity, and self-motivation by promoting open communication with members, Chief & Council, and staff.

UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

Ten years after the United Nations General Assembly adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Truth and Reconciliation Report, the Government of British Columbia released a statement committing to working in partnership with Indigenous peoples to embrace and implement UNDRIP.

The Province has made reconciliation a cross-government priority and commits to meaningful reconciliation with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, and a true government-to-government relationship based on rights, reconciliation, and respect. British Columbia cabinet ministers have been tasked with reviewing policies, programs, and legislation to determine how to bring the principles of the UN declaration to action in British Columbia. This commitment has not yet required a formal commitment from local governments, but many local governments have engaged in Protocol Agreements and have taken other steps to build relationships with local First Nations.

OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS AND LOCAL PARTNERS

BC ASSESSMENT

[BC Assessment](#) maintains real property assessments in compliance with the *Assessment Act*, which requires that properties be assessed as of July 1st each year. To do this, BC Assessment produces assessment information annually to provide tax authorities with a tax base and other information collected about a property.

BC MUNICIPAL SAFETY ASSOCIATION

The central purpose of the [BC Municipal Safety Association](#) is to improve worker health and safety through the sharing of knowledge and resources within local government. The BCMSA holds quarterly meetings to provide information and presentations on various topics and provide members with the opportunity to share problems and programs.

CIVIC INFO BC

[CivicInfo BC](#) is British Columbia's local government information hub. This portal website has operated since April 2000, providing a wide variety of tools and information resources for those who work, or have an interest, in the province's local government sector. In 1998, a needs assessment funded by the Union of BC Municipalities identified the need for a comprehensive, online local government information service. To make this a reality, a steering committee of the province's major municipal organizations was assembled, and seed funding was secured.

FEDERATION OF CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES

The [Federation of Canadian Municipalities](#) (FCM) represents the interests of municipalities on policy and program matters that fall within federal jurisdiction. Members include Canada's largest cities, small urban and rural communities, and 18 provincial and territorial municipal associations. It has been the national voice of municipal government since 1901. Since then, municipal governments have maintained a strong advocacy role in lobbying the federal government to include municipal concerns in policy development and national decision-making.

Through their national organization, FCM makes sure the federal government understands the full impact of their decisions on municipal governments and taxpayers. FCM also invites its members to submit resolutions. However, these resolutions should be on subjects of national municipal interest and fall within the federal government's jurisdiction.

FRASER – FORT GEORGE REGIONAL HOSPITAL DISTRICT

Regional Hospital Districts were created to provide funding for the establishment, acquisition, construction, reconstruction, enlargement operation and maintenance of hospitals and hospital facilities. Hospital Districts are governed according to the *Hospital District Act* and the BC Government ministry responsible is the Ministry of Health. Local governments within each region have representation on the Hospital District Board, facilitated through the Regional District.

The District Of Mackenzie is a member of the Fraser-Fort George Regional Hospital District (RHD). The RHD was established in 1967 and shares the same boundaries, directors, and administrative staff as the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George. The RHD operates under the authority of the *Hospital District Act*. The RHD shares in the capital funding for health facilities and medical equipment within its boundaries and includes the following principal health facilities operated by the Northern Health Authority:

- University Hospital of Northern British Columbia;
- Mackenzie and District Hospital and Health Centre;
- McBride and District Hospital; and
- Valemount Health Centre.

Financial Services provides financial administration with respect to capital funding for the RHD, including budget, financial plan; financial statement preparation; investment monitoring; and MFA borrowing.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

It is common for a Council member to feel overwhelmed in their new role. [The Local Government Leadership Academy \(LGLA\)](#) supports and promotes education and training for local government (LGLA) supports and promotes education and training for local government and First Nations elected officials, and senior administrators throughout the Province of British Columbia.

The LGLA Certificate Program is designed to support and encourage elected officials to enhance their leadership skills and knowledge to help enable effective local governance. Benefits of obtaining a certificate include:

- development of [core leadership competencies](#) essential for effective governance;
- increased understanding of both the “big picture” and the “fine details” of governance; and
- recognition of commitment to continuous learning.

MINISTRY OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

The [Ministry of Municipal Affairs](#) oversees local governments and provides the legislation, authority, permissions, and guidance to allow local governments to function. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs takes leadership in supporting local governments and residents to build vibrant and healthy communities that are well governed, livable, safe, economically resilient, and socially and environmentally responsible.

MUNICIPAL FINANCE AUTHORITY

The [Municipal Finance Authority](#) (MFA) is an independent agency of the provincial government. MFA was established in 1970 by the Municipal Finance Authority Act to contribute to the financial well-being of local governments in BC. Municipalities in British Columbia are required to finance all long-term borrowing requirements through the MFA. Local governments may only borrow from lending institutions for cash flow purposes within a single fiscal year while waiting on tax revenues in June. Municipalities may only finance long-term debt for capital purposes, and when they do, they must borrow from a single lender. The *Community Charter* and the *Municipal*

Liabilities Regulation regulate how much a local government may borrow in a particular year, the overall capital debt ceiling, and the processes to seek approval.

MUNICIPAL INSURANCE ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

In the mid-1980s, local governments in British Columbia were facing a crisis. Liability insurance premiums had increased five-fold for more than half of British Columbia's local governments, deductibles were soaring, and coverage limits were dropping. Most concerning was the lack of available coverage for significant liability exposures faced by some governments. It seemed that the only options were to either increase taxes or accept insufficient coverage. Seeing that the solution was not going to emerge from private industry, communities in BC turned to each other for support. The Union of BC Municipalities created a task force that returned with the recommendation to establish a self-insurance pooling program. In November 1987, the [Municipal Insurance Association of British Columbia](#) (MIABC) was born and accepted its first members: all 144 of them. Over the decades that followed, the organization grew in reach, expertise, and capital base. By 2006, the MIABC was able to return dividends to its members for the first time and has continued to do so every year since but one.

RCMP

The [Royal Canadian Mounted Police](#) (RCMP) is both a federal and a national police force of Canada. The RCMP provides law enforcement at the federal level. Municipalities under 5000 in population do not pay directly for this service.

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF FRASER FORT GEORGE

The [Regional District of Fraser Fort George](#) (RDFFG) is a municipal government incorporated pursuant to the *Local Government Act* of British Columbia. Its assets and liabilities belong to the electorate (residents and property owners) within the geographic boundaries of the RDFFG. About 100,000 people reside within the boundary of RDFFG. The RDFFG Board of Directors consists of fourteen elected officials. Seven are appointed by their municipal Councils and seven are directly elected to the Board from within the electoral areas of the RDFFG. The following local governments comprise the RDFFG:

- City of Prince George
- District of Mackenzie
- Village of Valemount
- Village of McBride
- Electoral Areas A, C, D, E, F, G and H.

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE TRUST

Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT) is an independent regional development corporation that provides funding and capacity to stimulate economic growth in central and northern British Columbia.

The Province of British Columbia established NDIT with legislation in 2005 through the *Northern Development Initiative Trust Act*. The corporation was infused with two deposits totaling \$185 million. The Trust's Board decided the corporation would be a sustainable funding organization, which means it only grants out a portion of its capital base annually that is balanced with its long-term investment returns. As a result, NDIT has become a lasting legacy supporting economic development throughout central and northern B.C. in perpetuity. Today, the Trust's capital base totals more than \$230 million.

NDIT covers approximately 70 per cent of the province of British Columbia, Canada. The region encompasses 39 municipalities, nine regional districts, one regional municipality and 88 First Nations communities. The region is divided into four principal regions (Cariboo-Chilcotin/Lillooet, Northeast, Northwest, and Prince George) as outlined in the Northern Development Initiative Trust Act (2004). Each of the four regions has a Regional Advisory Committee comprised of elected local government leaders that advises Northern Development's Board of Directors. This ensures that local knowledge is incorporated into Northern Development's Strategic Plan as well as funding decisions.

NORTHERN HEALTH

The Minister of Health appoints the Board of directors for [Northern Health](#). Under the *Health Authorities Act*, regional health authorities are responsible for:

- developing and implementing a regional health plan;
- developing policies, setting priorities, preparing, and submitting budgets to the Minister and allocating resources for the delivery of health services, in the region, under the regional health plan;
- administering and allocating grants made by the government for the provision of health services in the region;
- delivering regional services through its employees or entering into agreements with the government or, other public or private bodies for the delivery of those services;
- developing and implementing regional standards; and
- monitoring, evaluating, and complying with Provincial and regional standards.

UNION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA MUNICIPALITIES

The [Union of British Columbia Municipalities](#) (UBCM) is a non-profit organization consisting of members formed to represent the various municipalities of the Province in one organization and allow a common voice for local government. Through conventions, UBCM provides an opportunity for local governments of all sizes and from all areas of the province to come together, share experiences and take united positions. UBCM is involved in intergovernmental committees, regular meetings with Provincial Ministers, and contact senior government daily. In addition, it provides central services for its members through various programs and is an essential source of information for local government. An Annual General Meeting and Convention for UBCM takes place mid-late September.

LEGISLATION AND OTHER AGREEMENTS

COMMUNITY CHARTER

The [Community Charter](#) is provincial legislation that provides municipalities with the legal framework for powers, duties, and functions, authority and discretion to address existing and future community needs, and the flexibility to determine public interest of their communities. While the *Community Charter* is more relevant for municipalities, there are sections that also apply to regional districts (such as parcel taxes, conflict of interest, disqualification from office and open meeting requirements).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT

[Local Government Act](#) is provincial legislation that provides the legal framework and foundation for the establishment and continuation of local governments to represent the interests and respond to the needs of their communities. The Act also applies broadly to all local governments including municipalities in relation to matters such as incorporation, boundary changes, statutory requirements for elections, and planning and land use powers. The Act also includes key provincial powers such as the authority for the office of the Inspector of Municipalities. The *Local Government Act* is the most relevant legislation for regional districts.

LOCAL ELECTIONS CAMPAIGN FINANCING ACT

[Local Elections Campaign Financing Act](#) establishes rules for local government candidates, elector organizations and third-party advertising sponsors, including disclosure requirements for campaign financing and election advertising. The campaign financing rules create accountability and transparency by requiring the recording and disclosing of detailed information about financial and non-financial activities. Under the Act, Elections BC is responsible for administering campaign financing and third-party advertising rules for all local government elections in British Columbia

ASSESSMENT ACT

Assessment Act describes the methods to be used in valuing and classifying property, the rules for providing assessment notices and assessment rolls to property owners and taxing bodies and a framework for review and appeal of the valuation, classification, and exemption of property.

CEMETERY AND FUNERAL SERVICES ACT

Cemetery and Funeral Services Act controls the disposition of human remains, ensures cemeteries meet requirements of local authorities, and protects consumers who invest in pre-need cemetery supplies and services. Awareness may be necessary as some municipalities own and operate cemeteries.

DOMESTIC TRADE AGREEMENTS

[Domestic Trade Agreements](#): Municipalities in British Columbia are party to two trade agreements: the New West Partnership Trade Agreement and the Canadian Free Trade Agreement. Through these agreements, the province has sought to reduce trade barriers, enhance labour mobility, and open investment opportunities for British Columbians and British Columbia businesses.

DRINKING WATER PROTECTION ACT AND REGULATION

[Drinking Water Protection Act and Regulation](#) governs all municipal water systems and sets certain requirements to ensure the provision of safe drinking water.

EMERGENCY PROGRAM ACT AND REGULATIONS

[Emergency Program Act \(EPA\) and Regulations](#) governs how to manage an emergency or disaster in British Columbia. Measures. It outlines the roles and responsibilities of the provincial government, and local authorities. The *EPA* provides the authority for the granting of additional powers during a state of emergency or a state of local emergency and governs the coming into force, expiration, and termination of these states of emergency.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS ACT AND REGULATIONS

[Employment Standards Act and Regulation](#) establishes British Columbia’s minimum standards of employment in many areas including payment of wages, hours of work, overtime, vacation, and holidays, leaves and termination of employment. It establishes the processes by which an employee can seek recourse if the standards have not been met

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ACT AND REGULATIONS

[Environmental Management Act and Regulations](#) governs the management of waste in British Columbia. The act provides the authority for introducing wastes into the environment, while protecting our health and the environment. Specifically, the act enables the use of permits, regulations, and codes of practice to authorize discharges to the environment and enforcement options, such as administrative penalties, orders, and fines to encourage compliance.

GENERAL LOCAL ELECTIONS ADMINISTRATION

[General Local Elections Administration](#) of local elections is a shared responsibility between local governments and Elections BC. The *Local Government Act*, *Community Charter* and *Local Election Campaign Financing Act* are the main pieces of legislation that governs municipal elections by establishing procedures around campaigning, voting, and counting of votes.

INTERPRETATION ACT

Interpretation Act sets out rules for interpreting legislation (various presumptions, definitions, rules of statutory interpretation and construction) that apply to all British Columbia Acts and regulations, and who can act under legislation. For example, all bylaws (with a few notable exceptions) require “one clear day” between third reading and adoption. The definition of “one clear day” is not provided in the legislation but rather, in the Interpretation Act.

LAND TITLE AND SURVEY ACTS AND REGULATIONS

[Land Title and Survey Acts and Regulations](#) governs the land titles and survey systems in British Columbia, ensuring the integrity of BC’s Torrens-based land title system for registering land titles,

and interests in titles such as mortgages and other charges, maintains the quality of the Province's land survey structure, and issues Crown grant documents that transfer Crown land into private ownership, to support government's Crown land allocation programs.

LETTERS PATENT

[Letters Patent](#) – Are the legal documents created by the BC Government to incorporate municipalities. The Letters Patent is a local government's birth certificate and is issued by the Province upon incorporation. The Letters Patent lists the corporate name of the local government, the area and boundaries, and other matters if necessary. Supplementary Letters Patent are issued when changes are made to the original Letters Patent. These changes could be the result of a boundary change, electoral area name change or authorization to provide services not included in guiding legislation.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BYLAW ENFORCEMENT

[Local Government Bylaw Enforcement](#) refers to actions that may be taken by a municipality to ensure members of the community comply with local government bylaws. Governing legislation includes the *Local Government Act*, *Community Charter*, *Local Government Bylaw Notice Enforcement Act*, and the *Bylaw Notice Enforcement Regulation*.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

[Local Government Legislative Framework](#) - The *Community Charter* and *Local Government Act* are the main pieces of legislation that defines the core authority and responsibilities of municipalities. Since local governments deal with a wide range of matters, many other Acts and legal rules affect local governments.

OFFENSE ACT

[Offense Act](#) - Local government may establish penalties for bylaw contraventions by bylaw, most typically as monetary fines. For serious bylaw contraventions, the local government may pursue prosecution for a summary conviction in Provincial court under the Offense Act.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT

[Public Health Act](#) – is a legislative framework that establishes conditions which help to improve the health and wellbeing of the public and identifies the responsibilities for local government regarding public health.

SAFETY STANDARDS ACT AND REGULATIONS

[Safety Standards Act and Regulations](#) – governs the following technologies and the people who work with them: Amusement rides, Boilers, pressure vessels and refrigeration systems, Electrical equipment and systems, Elevators and escalators, Gas appliances and systems, Railways, Ski lifts and aerial trams.

TRANSPORTATION ACTS AND REGULATIONS

[Transportation Acts and Regulations](#) identifies responsibilities and powers of the authorities that oversee the various aspects related to transportation issues in British Columbia.

WATER SUSTAINABILITY ACT AND REGULATIONS

[Water Sustainability Act and Regulation](#) governs the rules for issuing water licenses and approvals and directing the allocation of surface water and groundwater.

WEED CONTROL ACT AND REGULATIONS

[Weed Control Act and Regulation](#) imposes a duty on all land occupiers to control designated noxious plants. The purpose for the Act is to protect the province's economy, natural resources, and society from the negative impacts of foreign weeds.

WORKERS COMPENSATION ACT AND OCCUPATION HEALTH AND SAFETY REGULATION

[Workers Compensation Act and Occupational Health and Safety Regulation](#) set out the framework for health and safety in British Columbia workplaces, including municipalities. Employers must create a health and safety program and have appropriate policies and procedures to support a healthy and safe workplace effectively. In addition to a health and safety program, employers must provide and maintain appropriate training for employees, ensure

supervisors have training and support, ensure first aid equipment and trained attendants, and regularly inspect the workplace for issues.

In 2013, WorkSafe BC created workplace bullying and harassment policies to provide a consistent legal framework for employers to meet their legal obligations to prevent and address these issues. Bullying and harassment include any inappropriate conduct or comment by a person towards a worker that the person knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause that worker to be humiliated or intimidated.

It is important to note that intent does not determine whether the behaviour is bullying and harassment. A person cannot excuse their behaviour by saying they did not intend it to be humiliating or intimidating. Council dynamics may at times become passionate. While Council has the freedom to debate an issue, it is essential that the debate does not impact the language, tone, or body.